

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2435 without my signature.

Allowing school districts to teach middle school and high school students about the importance of properly maintaining their personal finances is a worthy objective. However, this bill is unnecessary because school districts already have the authority to teach “budgeting, savings, and credit,” under current law.

Although I am unable to support this legislation, I agree with the importance of learning to spend wisely and properly managing finances. Learning to balance a checkbook, saving money for a rainy day, and understanding the dangers of too much credit card debt are all vital skills for kids to learn in order to become responsible adults.

While teaching financial responsibility is important for our children, I would welcome future legislation that requires all members of the State Legislature to complete a course in financial management and responsibility.

Requiring legislators to take a refresher course on managing finances may be the wisest investment the State could ever make. California may never have found itself in the deep fiscal crisis that it has had to endure, if such a requirement were signed into law earlier.

One of the best lessons we can offer to our children, is to practice sound financial principles, and I believe the Legislature should begin teaching kids by example.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger